

## TULAREMIA

Tularemia is a zoonotic bacterial disease caused by *Francisella tularensis*. Infection occurs through various routes including the bite from infected ticks, flies, or mosquitoes, handling the carcasses of infected animals, eating the meat from infected animals, or inhalation of dust from contaminated soil, hay or grain. The clinical presentation depends on the route of infection and most often presents as an indolent ulcer at the site of introduction of the bacteria, with swelling of regional lymph nodes. Ingestion of the organism presents with pharyngitis, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. Inhalation may present with pneumonic involvement or a primary septicemia. All clinical types may be complicated by pneumonia and may have a fatal outcome without specific treatment.

### **Laboratory Criteria for Confirmation:**

?? Isolation of *Francisella tularensis* from a clinical specimen, **OR**

?? Fourfold or greater change in agglutination titer between paired sera obtained ? 2 weeks apart and analyzed at the same time and in the same laboratory.

### **Case Classification**

*Confirmed:* A clinically compatible case with confirmatory laboratory results.

*Probable:* A clinically compatible case with laboratory results indicative of presumptive infection.

?? Elevated serum antibody titer(s) to *F. tularensis* antigen (without documented fourfold or greater change) in a patient with no history of tularemia vaccination or

?? Detection of *F.tularensis* in a clinical specimen by fluorescent assay.

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### **Epidemiology**

Confirmed Cases      4

Probable Cases        4

Two of the four confirmed cases were in children, 4 years of age. The other cases ranged from 21 years to 68 years. Three of the four confirmed cases were males and all 4 probables were male. All of the cases occurred in counties in the western half of the state.